Decision Taken in Conference of Housing Ministers Held in Delhi

1684. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Conference of Housing Ministers held on 26th June, 2000 in New Delhi took some positive decisions for radical improvement in the area of housing in the country;

(b) whether Government propose to enact special legislation to reorganise the State Housing Boards and strengthen the Cooperative Housing Movement in the Country;

(c) whether any decision was taken in the Conference with regard to housing programmes for slum dwellers and sponsoring of more funds for them by his Ministry; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT & POVERTY ALLEVIATION (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) Yes, Sir. The conference provided several recommendations, which will be useful for improvement of housing sector in the country.

(b) The conference proposed reorganisation of the housing agencies in the States and advised them to prepare a new Housing Board Act. The proposed Act should combine the advantages that are available to a corporatised body, such as flexibility and speed in decision making with the advantages that are inherent in the agency enjoying sovereign powers of the State such as land acquisition and recovery of the dues as arrears of land revenue. Similar recommendations were made for activising Cooperation Housing too.

(c) and (d) One of the main recommendations of the Conference is about the conversion of the Scheme of National Slum Development Programme into a Centrally Sponsored Scheme and its integraiton with a new programme under which more funds could be made available for this programme.